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ACTION EUR-00

INFO LOG-00 NP-00 AMAD-00 ACQ-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 DS-00
FBIE-00 UTED-00 VC-00 H-01 TEDE-00 INR-00 IO-00
LAB-01 VCE-00 DCP-01 NSAE-00 PER-00 IRM-00 TEST-00
USIE-00 DSCC-00 DRL-02 NFAT-00 SAS-00 /005W
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P 191425Z AUG 02
FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9277
INFO AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMEMBASSY ANKARA

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ATHENS 002867

FOR EUR/SE GRECINOS/GOLLNER-SWEET/RGLOVER; EUR/PA LSCHWARTZ,
MTONER; H FOR J MILLER

THESSALONIKI FOR PA MMAKRI

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: KPAO, PREL, GR
SUBJECT: RELEASE OF PRUS VOLUME ELICITS MILD MEDIA INTEREST
AND QUESTIONS ABOUT LACUNAE

1. SUMMARY. THE 15 AUGUST RELEASE OF THE FOREIGN RELATIONS
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OF THE UNITED STATES VOLUME PERTAINING TO GREECE, TURKEY AND
CYPRUS IN THE PERIOD 1964-68 DREW SECONDARY ATTENTION FROM
TV, RADIO AND PRINT MEDIA. ALL MEDIA NOTED THAT THE USG WAS
FULLY AWARE OF POSSIBLE COUP ATTEMPTS DURING THIS PERIOD OF
POLITICAL FERMENT, BUT SEEMED TO DISPLAY "APATHY AND
INDIFFERENCE" TO THEN KING CONSTANTINE'S REQUEST FOR US
MILITARY SUPPORT FOR A COUP OF HIS OWN. THE MEDIA NOTED
THAT AMERICAN AUTHORITIES FEARED THAT ANDREAS PAPANDREOU'S
POLITICAL ASCENT WOULD RESULT IN A MORE ANTI-AMERICAN
COURSE, AND SAID THE DOCUMENTS SHOWED THEN-US AMBASSADOR
PHILLIPS TALBOT UNAWARE THAT THE CIA STATION WAS IN TOUCH
WITH THE GREEK COLONELS WHO PLOTTED THE SUCCESSFUL COUP
D'ETAT IN APRIL, 1967. DESPITE THIS MATERIAL, MOST MEDIA
WERE RATHER DISAPPOINTED BY THE CONTENTS OF THE VOLUME, AND
SEEMED MORE INTRIGUED BY THE USG BUREAUCRATIC IN-FIGHTING
WHICH DELAYED THE RELEASE OF A VOLUME PRINTED IN 2000. ALL

Department of State, A/GIS/IPS/SRP

Change to

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IPS by M. Russe II Date 12/03/13

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MEDIA ASSERTED THAT THE USG GAVE THE GO-AHEAD IN THE WAKE OF RECENT ARRESTS OF MEMBERS OF THE GREEK TERRORIST GROUP 17 NOVEMBER. END SUMMARY.

WHO KNEW WHAT, AND WHEN

2. THE 777-PAGE VOLUME WAS RELEASED ON A GREEK HOLIDAY, SO IT TOOK UNTIL SUNDAY AND EVEN MONDAY FOR MOST PAPERS TO SINK THEIR TEETH INTO THE CONTENTS. RADIO AND TV NEWS BULLETINS CARRIED HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REPORT AS A SECONDARY ITEM IN THEIR SUNDAY BULLETINS, AND NOTED THE POINTS CITED ABOVE. THE TWO LARGEST TV STATIONS, MEGA AND ANTENNA, RAN VOICE-OVERS OF "REVELATIONS" IN THE FRUS VOLUME OVER HISTORICAL

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PHOTOS FROM MID-1960S AND THE COUP D'ETAT. SOME REPORTS NOTED THAT TALBOT SEEMED TO BE EXPECTING THE KING TO ENGINEER A COUP IN COOPERATION WITH THE GENERALS, AND WAS SOMEWHAT SHOCKED WHEN IT TURNED OUT TO BE THE COLONELS WHO WERE RESPONSIBLE. ALL NEWSPAPERS, INCLUDING PRO-GOVERNMENT, ANTI-AMERICAN ELEFTHERTYPIA AND CONSERVATIVE, PRO-MAIN OPPOSITION ELEFTHERTOS TYPOS, POINTED OUT THAT THE DOCUMENTS SHOW THE CIA OPERATED UNDER NO SUCH MISAPPREHENSION, AND WAS "FULLY AWARE OF WHAT THE COLONELS WERE GOING TO DO." IN A FRONT-PAGE STORY, INDEPENDENT, RESPECTED KATHIMERINI WROTE THAT EVEN THOSE US OFFICIALS BLIND-SIDED BY THE COUP WERE REASSURED BY THE PRO-US SYMPATHIES OF COL. PAPADOPOULOS, WHO HAD SERVED AS A LIAISON WITH DIA, AND OF COL. PATTAKOS, "WHO HAD RELATIVES IN THE US ARMY."

REASONS FOR DELAY

3. ALL MEDIA DEVOTED EQUAL ATTENTION TO THE DELAY IN THE RELEASE OF THE VOLUME. ON SUNDAY 18 AUGUST, EXTENSIVE INSIDE REPORTS IN TO VIMA AND KATHIMERINI CLAIMED THAT CIA AUTHORITIES HAD DELAYED RELEASE OF THE PUBLISHED VOLUME IN THE FEAR THAT THERE WOULD BE REPRISALS AGAINST AMERICAN OFFICIALS CURRENTLY IN GREECE. THE TWO PAPERS SAID THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE WRANGLING BETWEEN THE STATE DEPARTMENT, REPRESENTED BY THEN US AMBASSADOR BURNS AND BY HISTORIAN JIM MILLER, AND THE CIA OVER BOTH WHAT THE VOLUME SHOULD AND SHOULD NOT CONTAIN, AND THE DATE OF ITS RELEASE. EVEN THOUGH ONLY 0.04 OF THE DECLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS WERE CENSORED, THE 19 AUGUST EDITION OF ELEFTHERTYPIA DIVINED A

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SUSPICIOUS NUMBER OF HOLES IN THE ACCOUNT, AND RAN THE SUB-
HEAD "THE AMERICANS ARE HIDING THE ROLE OF THEIR SECRET
SERVICES." TO VIMA NOTED THAT THE VOLUME'S RELEASE HAD BEEN
CAREFULLY TIMED TO COINCIDE WITH THE SLEEPYEST TIME OF THE
SUMMER: AUGUST 15 IS A HOLIDAY AND TRADITIONALLY THE HIGH
POINT OF THE GREEK SUMMER, WITH MOST OF THE COUNTRY AT THE
BEACH.

4. MOST ELECTRONIC AND PRINT MEDIA, STILL AWASH IN NON-STOP
COVERAGE OF THE CASES OF THE ARRESTED TERRORISTS BELONGING
TO THE 17 NOVEMBER GROUP, ELIDED BETWEEN THE TWO STORIES,
AND CLAIMED, ON THE BASIS OF CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE ALONE,
THAT THE CIA LIFTED ITS OBJECTIONS TO THE RELEASE OF THE
REPORT ONCE THE GOG HAD "BROKEN" 17N. THUS ENDED A DEADLOCK
THAT BEGAN WHEN THE DECLASSIFICATION PROJECT ENDED IN 1999.

GOVERNMENT REACTION

5. BACK FROM THE BEACH AND IN TYPICAL FORM WAS GOVERNMENT
SPOKESMAN CHRISTOS PROTOPAPPAS, WHO SAID "NONE OF THESE
REVELATIONS COME AS BIG NEWS TO US. IT WAS WELL-KNOWN THAT

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THE SECRET SERVICES OF CERTAIN COUNTRIES WERE INVOLVED IN
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WHAT HAPPENED DURING THAT TIME. IT IS NO COINCIDENCE THAT
PRESIDENT CLINTON, ON HIS VISIT HERE, APOLOGIZED FOR THE
ROLE THOSE SERVICES PLAYED IN CREATING AND IN SUSTAINING THE
JUNTA." (COMMENT: THIS IS A DELIBERATE MISREADING OF
CLINTON'S FAR MORE NUANCED STATEMENT IN NOVEMBER, 1999.)

IS THAT ALL THERE IS?

6. COMMENT. OVERALL (AND FORTUNATELY) THERE SEEMED TO BE
A SENSE OF DISAPPOINTMENT AT THE CONTENTS OF THE FRUS. THE
TWO YEAR DELAY IN THE VOLUME'S RELEASE AND THE
CONSPIRATORIAL BENT OF MOST GREEK MEDIA HAD TEMPTED READERS
TO BELIEVE THERE WOULD BE NEW EVIDENCE OF SKULDUGGERY AND
MALFEASANCE. INSTEAD, AS AN INSIGHTFUL OP-ED PIECE IN
KATHIMERINI (8/19) NOTED, IT SHOWED THE DISORGANIZATION AND
VANITY OF THE GREEK POLITICAL ESTABLISHMENT, AND THAT
ESTABLISHMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALLOWING THE JUNTA TO
REMAIN IN POWER FOR SEVEN YEARS. "NO ONE HAS EVER ACCEPTED
THAT THE OLD REGIME COLLAPSED BECAUSE OF THE INABILITY OF
THE POLITICIANS WHO COMPRISED IT, GIVEN THAT ALL THOSE WHO
SURVIVED ITS COLLAPSE, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF KING
CONSTANTINE, RESURFACED TO BUILD THE POST-1974 POLITICAL
SYSTEM," WROTE DIPLOMATIC EDITOR COSTAS IORDANIDES.

7. INDEED, IN A COUNTRY WHERE PARANOIA IS AS RIFE AS IT IS
IN GREECE, IT MAY BE THE WISEST COURSE OF ACTION TO BE AS
OPEN AS POSSIBLE WITH THE RELEASE OF DECLASSIFIED, ARCHIVAL
MATERIAL. IN THIS CASE, DOING SO ALLOWED US TO MAP OUT THE
LIMITS OF WHAT US INVOLVEMENT IN GREECE'S DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

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HAS BEEN, AND TO ADVERTISE, BY EXAMPLE, THE OPENNESS OF
AMERICAN POLITICAL CULTURE. RELEASING THE DOCUMENTS AS
PROMPTLY AND AS UNABRIDGED AS POSSIBLE HELPS US IN OUR
CONTINUING CAMPAIGN TO "NORMALIZE" THE GREEK-US RELATIONSHIP
AND REDUCE THE LEVEL OF ANTI-AMERICANISM BASED ON SUSPICION

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OF US POLICY INTERESTS IN GREECE. END COMMENT.
MILLER

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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